

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Cisneros **ORIGINAL DATE** 1/17/2008
LAST UPDATED _____ **HB** _____
SHORT TITLE NM Tech Aquifer Mapping **SB** 2
ANALYST McOlash

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$450.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 2 appropriates \$450,000 from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology for expenditure in FY 2009 and subsequent fiscal years for the Bureau of Geology and Mineral resources to conduct statewide aquifer mapping.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on program history at NMTech, the appropriation of \$450,000 contained in this bill is identified as a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Information on the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology website indicates that the Bureau of Geology and Mineral resources has been engaged in hydrogeologic studies of New Mexico's aquifers in cooperation with partners at the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and the New Mexico Environment Department. Beginning in the mid-1990s with geologic mapping and aquifer analysis in the Albuquerque Basin and a hydrogeology study in Placitas, the Bureau has since developed an aquifer mapping program that applies a combination of geologic geophysical, hydrologic, and geochemical information to develop descriptive models of groundwater flow in important aquifers around the state.

The objective of the aquifer mapping program is to provide critically needed information on the “health” of the state’s groundwater resource. Baseline data gathered during the studies improve the understanding of the geologic framework of aquifers, their hydrologic characteristics, water levels in the aquifers and how they change over time, and the occurrence of natural contaminants such as arsenic and uranium that affect the potability of groundwater.

Aquifer studies range in scope from short-term local projects to long-term, regional studies engaging a variety of disciplines and collaborators. With initial support from the 2005 State Legislature in the form of a \$300,000 one-year appropriation, the program has been able to complete some studies while continuing or starting others. Past efforts have completed or contributed to studies in the Albuquerque Basin, Placitas, Estancia Basin, and the Taos Valley. Results of a three-year study in the Española Basin are contributing to a collaborative effort by Santa Fe County and the City of Santa Fe to build a regional groundwater flow model to assist with resource administration and management. In 2005, a multi-year water-level monitoring study began in the Roswell artesian basin, while studies in Arroyo Hondo north of Taos and the Peñasco Valley were completed and a new hydrogeologic study was initiated in the southern Sacramento Mountains, funded by the Otero County Soil and Water Conservation District with funds allocated by the state legislature.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMTech provides administrative support for the Bureau of Geology and Mineral significant additional impact is anticipated if this legislation is adopted.

BM/mt